

STATIC AND ACCENT

by

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis continues my ongoing interest with art and writing, and my concern with investigating both of them as a subject I find difficult and frightening. I manipulated, and integrated sources from various disciplines, until the major source text became accessible. Tension regarding inheriting personal and general history is a vital aspect of the work. My engagement with art and writing is in line with Max Ernst and Norma Cole. Their works exhibit the energy of collaboration between multiple mediums and forms.

The *rewrites* are a type of translation, interpretation; they are an alternate version of the original. The *rewrites* are an exercise in re-purposing and recycling, answering the question of how source texts can be rethought. When manipulating a text, I balance between the original and new voice, and more specifically, work on resolving the issue without sacrificing the intent of either voice. To better accomplish this result I looked to the erasure work of Ronald Johnson and Tom Phillips, who both take on original text with the intent of preservation as well as invention. In these pieces I have worked at keeping a constant tension between archaic and modern, in regards to diction, style and overarching themes. Also, with respect to this tension, is the process of analyzing what should stay as original, what should go, be rewritten, or added as new. I view the idea of recycling texts in relation to energy. If energy is neither created nor destroyed, and only transformed I not only feel confident, but obligated to begin with these texts.

The 'I' in the texts is the culmination of inherited people. The 'I' represents multiple generations, as an amalgamation of memory and experience. The 'I' also retains the essence of the original text, as well as something new, and specific to inheritance and modernity. These memories, the texts, are perhaps inherited second-hand memories. They are like a gaudy brooch from your great aunt, a dusty stack of documents left to me. I am responsible for a type of preservation. The preservation of inheritance, in physical and memorial form, is a huge undertaking. The method and successful works of Brenda Coultas and Marjorie Welsh influenced the subject of social inheritance in my work. I investigate how much is mine to take, how much can I leave, can I alter it, do I remain a separate entity from it, or is inheritance just the product of a child's game of telephone? I inherit old texts, both historical and personal. I inherit history. I can't attempt to accept the near, nonetheless the now, if I can't immerse myself successfully in what has come before, and to understand it fully, I had to reshape it.

Also of concern is the importance of process in regards to repurposing and recycling texts. An author who creates with all the above intentions is Shin Yu Pai. Process is more valuable to me than a final product. A final product is lovely, but the finishing is fleeting and has less impact than the time spent deep in process.

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STAGE I: HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDE

**Plague of Plastic Moons** (Rewrite of *Song of Songs*)

**Chapter 1**

The plague of plastic moons is mine.

Take my coal-skin with Narcissus' mirrored hands—  
bitter with unripe pomegranate.

You smell of wet parchment—  
your name wells up as fermented ink—  
poetess' stab at your chest plate.

Drown me and the nameless will banish you—  
the king of names directs me to his chasm—  
your dimensions are more uncut than bark.

The fragmented endure.

*I am black,  
the sun hath tanned me;  
my mother's sons, incensed against me,  
made me keeper of the vineyards;  
but mine have I not kept.*

Tell me, slayer of grapes,  
where are your blueprints,  
where does your gaggle fly—  
why should I veil myself  
beside your herds of companions?

If you know not the fairest among women,  
go by the footsteps of your suckling  
kids, beside the tigress' tent.

I compare you, to a squatting goat.  
Your face exaggerated, your back saddled.  
We will make you studded and jeweled.

My castor oil soap scent loiters at your table.

My beloved is unto me as Verbena leaves that line my bones.  
My beloved is unto me as the Baobabs of En-gedi.

Behold—something, my love—  
behold—something—  
your eyes are Kestrels.

You are obtuse, my beloved,  
yet firestorm—our couch is leafy—  
the beams of our house are dried iris leaves,  
and our panels are wine-soaked corks.

## Chapter 2

I am a rosemary bush.

As a blade among fields,  
so is my beloved among the plagued.  
As a pomegranate-tree in a sandpit,  
so is my love among the moons.

Under its shadow I shrink,  
its fruit lovely and tart to taste.

He leads me to a backyard BBQ;  
his party napkins are violet.  
He offers me a gurken, and adjures me:  
*Refresh me with apples; for I am love-sick.*

His hands gouge, and knead my body.

Chorus: *O daughters of Jerusalem,  
awaken not,  
nor love.*

My beloved prances  
across the dunes,  
skips upon the hills.

My beloved is a gerbil;  
he stands on a pillow,  
he raises cicadas,  
he peers through your windows.

He speaks again:  
*The voice of the turtle is heard.  
The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs.  
O my little spanish chicken, sweet is thy squawk.  
The little foxes, how they soil my vineyards.*

My beloved is lye, and I am baking soda.  
Until the night, be like a frog buried  
in a mountain of spices.

### Chapter 3

Be night.

I lost my beloved for a time in the city.

I sought him in cardboard streets  
and under devoid overpasses.

I found him among wooly sidewalks.  
I led him along moon-tracks  
back to my mother's house,  
and into the chamber  
where I was conceived.  
I recite "this is where I was conceived, these are walls."

Chorus: *O daughters of Jerusalem,*  
*awaken not,*  
*nor love.*

Who emerges  
from the built-up smoke stacks,  
rank with ash and resin,  
with scrips of scrips?

Every man has his sword  
upon his inner thigh,  
because of dread in the night.

You had wheels on a cart built,  
a public bus  
of Okoumé wood,  
pillars of silver, top of gold, seat of purple velvet,  
inside inlaid with loaves from the daughters of Jerusalem.

Daughters of Zion,  
gaze upon your king,  
upon his crown,  
upon his robes,  
his palanquin,  
his houses,  
stables, chattle, farms, cities, factories,  
and upon his mighty men!

**Chapter 4**

Behold, neutrality, my love.

*Your eyes are as walnuts,  
hair as a flock of goats,  
teeth like ewes.*

*Your lips are like silk worms,  
temples like a pomegranate split open.*

*Your neck is like the tower of David bulging with turrets.*

*Your breasts are like two fawns,  
lips drop of myrrh.*

*My bride; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.*

## Chapter 5

*I have eaten my frozen veggie burrito.  
I have drunk wine with milk.*

*I try to sleep, but Hark! my beloved knocks:  
Open to me, my roast chicken, my undefiled;  
for my head is filled with saltwater, my locks with night sweat.  
I have taken off my bathrobe; how shall I put it on?  
I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?*

My beloved flashed his fingers  
in the hole of the door.  
I opened to my beloved; but he was gone.  
I saw no robe, slippers or footprints,  
only the imprint on the damp sheets.

O daughters of Jerusalem,  
if ye find my beloved, what will ye tell him?  
That I am love-sick?  
What is my beloved more than another?

My beloved is flushed.  
His head is globular,  
locks are curled crepe-paper,  
eyes of milk bottles,  
His cheeks are spiced sweet herbs,  
lips drop of myrrh.  
His hands are rods,  
legs are pillars of basalt,  
body polished with olive juice.

**Chapter 6**

Chorus: *Whither is thy beloved gone,  
O thou fair-rest among women?*

My beloved is gone down  
into his garden,  
to the beds of nuts,  
to gather seeds,  
and to feed on greens.

I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine, who feeds among the weeds.

*Thou art art, as a desert town, stiff as laminated flags.  
My chick, my turkey, my ocean snail, my blue.  
The concubines see, and press their hands to your cheeks.  
Down in the nut garden, green people plants bubble from the soil  
and the pomegranates hard and tough begin to sprout.*

## Chapter 7

*Return, your face  
is falling, return.*

*Where is your coffer.  
Close to your box.  
Both, a dance company  
flogging steps in sandals.*

*Your chained thighs—  
fascicle splayed.*

*Your navel—  
an endless well within your wheatgrass belly.*

*Your two breasts—  
again and again.*

*Your eyes trickle like an unsealed faucet.  
Your nose is Lebanon.  
Your head is a Camel, and hair purple.*

*You are flush with dates.  
I will climb up into the palm-tree,  
take hold of your branches;  
breathe you like apples.*

*Your moose lips—  
wine, &  
move gently in sleep.*

I am my beloved's, and his desire is to climb me as a trellis.

*Come, let us find a love motel, el bagnio!  
Let us—let us see if the vine has budded, the blossom opened, the pomegranates  
flowered.*

## Chapter 8

Just like my brother suck-suckled my mother's breasts—  
 Oh, these breasts!

None despise me—  
 these cracked kisses.

In the house you will instruct me and I shall make spiced wine for you,  
 from the juice of my pomegranate.

Your left hand and your right hand.

Chorus: *O daughters of Jerusalem,*  
*awaken not,*  
*nor love.*

I am a pin upon your heart, a seal upon your arm.  
 Love is tekhelet—  
 sea creature colored and lost—  
 water logged

If a daughter of Jerusalem be a wall, we will build upon her, felt turrets  
 and if they be a door, we will enclose her with pressed leaves.

The plague of plastic moons is before me.

STAGE II: REMOVAL OF VAPOR BARRIER

**The Paper Bird Laminate** (Rewrite of *The Wife's Lament*)

I singe this song unto myself,  
bird of soil and sand.

*My land is bare of chattering folk.*  
My dress exaggerates my sprouted hips,  
and tells of blown tires and deep wells I have suffered,  
present and past, but never more  
than the grief of dispersal—  
seedlings caught in sweating catch basins.

Since my rivers creep further  
from shore in this displaced state  
over the dried Reed sea, each dawn  
I wonder where the paved roads diverge.

When I set off to join the bearded men,  
a friendless exile in my sorry plight,  
my serrated streams of kinsmen plotted secretly  
how they might separate me from my hands,  
that I might breathe from my center  
in wretchedness apart and empty  
in the world: and I choked my energy out into space.

First I was led by the scent of fresh cut sweet peas,  
*the clouds [were] low along the ridges,*  
to settle upon a hill shaped like an open-mouthed bear.  
Among the people of the hill shaped like an open-mouthed bear  
I labored dearly in search of but a few beloved friends,  
but fell short, my heart as a scraped knee on asphalt.

Then I found a man covered in tire dust,  
whose shedding heart was contemplating gin.

We vowed that death alone would come between us.

Change came like laced boots,  
and it is now as though our love had never been,  
and from talweg to talus I must suffer  
the talons of my deer husband.

So in this underground garden I dwell,  
within the trunk of this earthy barrow.

Old is this earth-cave,  
*and sweet's the air with curly smoke.*

The dark dales lie beneath high hills above,  
scrap metal hedges laciniate my laced place.

Dear lovers lie in their beds,  
marinating in each others night sweat,  
while I walk in the cracked dawn  
under the coat-tree round this earthy cave  
where I must wait out sticky summers,  
weep my banishment  
*from all my burning bridges.*

Never can I contrive to set at rest my wormed heart,  
nor all the longing, which led my life to rot.

I wish I were as brave,  
for a man must be,  
and carve the birds  
and seem cheerful, even though his heart  
is chopped by a fan blade, against his clavicle.

All earthly joy must come from the root.

Since my land is fraught with demolished holies,  
frozen by storms beneath some desolate abode,  
beside the sea, my stray-hearted mosaic suffers pitilessly.

And all too often I recall  
a passive dwelling  
occupied by one who longs for a beloved  
and for whom grief must always be.

Note: Italics, "Sanctuary" by Dorothy Parker

**The Man With No Knees** (Rewrite of *Dead Sea Scroll: The Wiles of the Wicked Woman*)

Her utters suck in,  
always looking for detours.  
She wets the words of her mouth,  
and loves communal nonsense.

Her heart hoods sweaters,  
and nets kidneys.  
Her eyes have been filed,  
hands go down to the pit,  
feet sink into red  
and walk in sweet lemons.

Her *hips are mighty hips*,  
her *hips are magic hips*,  
and there are pins a-plenty in her wings.  
Her veils are twilight,  
her adornments slow moving.

In the foundries she dwells where  
her beds are couches  
and in the chimney of the night are her tents.

She is the start and the way,  
the runner of all who inherit her,  
and the sheet of all those who grasp her.  
Her paths are paths of cement,  
and her roads, track burrowers.

Her gates are gates,  
and in her closet, Sheol resides.

Some who go to her will not come back,  
and some who inherit her will sink to the pit.

She hides in city squares,  
stations herself near roadside idols,  
and no one interrupts her  
during incessant fornicating.

Her eyes scan like ink spools,  
and she raises her eyebrows like keys,

The man with no knees is easily spotted.  
He contorts upright,  
and diverts attention from his unbending  
by overtaking small animals.

He waves to her and in return  
she makes the simple flare.

STAGE III: PIPING THE FISHERIES

**The Wicker Ladder Maker** (Rewrite of *The Wanderer*)

She squats, sifts the water and finds the sea:  
mildewed strips of marble.

She strains, arms to the frost-water,  
troubled in heart over old wrack lines.  
She wages with shield and sieve  
exiled among flotsam and jetsam.  
Full-fixed is her fate.

So slumps the earth-walker,  
remembering elastic ships,  
and fierce dolphin wars.

Often in the closet of night  
she speaks her coffer full of corners:  
the dead see her palms.

Tight thought box,  
nozzled insides.

Muscle creak can't stave off fate,  
nor do vengeful hybrids.

Men eager to protect the vanquished  
shut tissue-paper names in their chest pocket.

Wretched from care, removed from land, far from dears,  
she rests her body against the sweetbriar,  
and lashes heart thoughts of her garland-friend  
covered in the black tar earth.

She crosses woven waves,  
cluttered with bleached coral,  
no web or chest of keepsakes seeking a giver—  
a place salted with amber shavings.

Receive her checkered skin—  
she with body, prone and banded.  
Sorrow is the woman.

Exile's path awaits her as twisted gold,  
pulled like taffy over butcher hooks.

Thoughts of loose spines in suit cases,  
no joy, no joy in the earth.

She recalls hallways of shaking animal heads,  
how in youth, swords were plastic and wands wired.

All light—varnished.

She who has long forgone riding the wooden horse carousel,  
loved and peeling on the last planked pier,  
knows when sorrow is too deep to extract  
like ornamental shrapnel carried by elders.

She runs on stilts as tall as Babel.  
Sleep-bound to the poor—  
dweller of scarves.

Her mindscape tongues the desert floor.  
She lays her head upon cacti  
like in old days when she took part in the midnight raids.

In yellow waves, she sees sand-pipers bathe,  
peck at lizards, hail strikes at skin, scales and feathers.

Care renews in her who must again and again  
roll over woven dunes:  
Therefore she cannot think.

Sew this earth covered of itself.  
It gives way to walls of wind covered with rime.

Rubber birds carry some away over the deep sea;  
wolves throw many upon rock shards;  
other's are buried as onions in an earth-pit.

So the maker and shaker of kind  
lays waste to this dwelling-place  
until the works of giants stand idle.

The woman wise in her art  
considers the wall and the dark,

remembers her mass of dead  
and speaks these words:

Where has the Dusky Seaside Sparrow gone?  
Where is the giver of the young?  
What of the fasting gaggle?  
Of four walls?  
Alas, the gold dust obsession!  
The shelled bell!  
The mailed letter!

Time is stained beneath the night's torso.

The wondrous high, decorated with cakes,  
stands over traces of the beloved extinct.

The ashen hands—  
thick and binding the earth.

All earth is wry.  
All habitation shall be evacuated.

So sat the woman  
listless in heart,  
apart, deep in rump.  
She is good who keeps words.

**The Pointed Mountain Camellett** (Rewrite of *The Seafarer*)

Recite yourself.

Relate foil to hard candy,  
bubbled against the grain.

I experience bitter breast-care,  
the terrible tossing of thrones,  
and the anxious night-watch  
holds me in the goat coral.

My feet, bound with care, my heart sighs hot.

(That man does not know. )

The pleasant land, moon as eye, the thrice-cold sea.

There, I hear nothing.

Sometimes the cry cheers me:  
the sound of gills in place of laughter.

There, storms ravage Delacour's Little Greb,  
coral-eyed one.  
Often the Great Auk screamed about,  
dead-feathered one.

The shoulder of night grows damp,  
the sky falls as corn kernels.

Thoughts urge my heat,  
that I should myself take the high,  
the tossing of the salt.

He is not a harp,  
nor a ring,  
nor a woman.

The groves take on blossom.  
Mournful guardian of melted birds,  
bitter in the breast-hoard.

Indeed, my seams are over the whale's realm,  
the surfaces, come again to me, ravenous.

For hotter to me, these dead.  
The days depart of gold-givers and gold-lovers.

All the dogs run with scissors  
and when they perform for the freaks,  
the blossom bows down.

Bird and hand reveal the same function:  
sweet terror of measures.

The flesh-home swallows.

## STAGE IV: GUTTURAL SHEATHING

**The Somnabulist Dance** (Rewrite of *Everyman*)

*Messenger:*

*Step right up. Now showing for the first time: [Everyman], the miraculous, [so-n-so] years of age, has for these so-n-so years been sleeping -- night and day -- without a break. Before your very eyes, [Everyman] will awaken from his death-like rigidity. Step right up. Step right up. Ladies and Gentlemen, [Everyman] will now answer any question you like to put to him. [Everyman] knows every secret. [Everyman] knows the past and can see into the future. Come up and test him for yourselves.<sup>1</sup>*

Give matter reverence.

Red-rover red-rover send *Everyman* right over.

We love our doggy lives  
and we love our doggy shows.  
We sticky our teeth with Milkduds  
and brace ourselves with cup-holders.

We play oxygen games  
all day we are ear-waxed  
and sweet to bear away.

This is not about a bird.  
This is a story about an ending—slight.

Sin is nectar, full and sweet—  
when the body lies in clay.

*Everyman* guesses how many jellybeans are in the carnival jar.

*God:*

I've seen these critters before—  
dolls with stubbed feet and cupped hands  
drowned in their mind mud pies  
and dug up buried pets.

My lawn died.  
All clean and red aged.  
They shed  
they forget to clean

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*

to be dead  
 their feet  
 my head.

Fork me.

World made company,  
 fast wicking,  
 become beasts  
 that eat every man.

The beasts run charitable  
 dance-a-thons classed in mansions.

I pleasure myself with their boring lament  
 and write their names on leaves still attached to trees.

I practice creating invisible monkeys,  
 release them in local school yards,  
 all flesh and color.

*Death*, these feet are sliced thin  
 and theirs are bursting with citrus and grape seed oil.

*Death*:  
 What does God want of *Death*?

*God*:  
*Everyman*, monster-man  
 must mine the ice cracks  
 razors sewn to his ankles  
 and waste not.

*Death*:  
 I'll run round the mulberry bush  
 this is the way I reach the deaf  
 with pockets full of poses.

Crude outsource great and small,  
 beastly wrack lines out of your laws.

Hell is always  
 a saturated ring.  
 Hell is fire through a grate.

Fire is like fire.

*Everyman* walks  
home through logged paths.  
It makes all the difference  
because it is the only one he knows.

His mind is flesh

*Everyman* stand still.

*Everyman*:  
Why?  
Who sent you?

I am a plastic ocean.

*Death*:  
God.  
*[Everyman]*, she was once a beautiful woman...She was known as the Peacock of the Air.  
How she got that way will never be known. Some say a jealous lover, others that it was  
the code of the freaks, others the storm. Believe it or not, there she is. Over there,  
*[Everywoman]*, the beautiful *[Everywoman]*, dancing, singing, marvel of the age,  
supreme flower of feminine pulchritude, the girl who discovered you don't have to have  
feet to be a dancer.<sup>2</sup>

*Everyman*:  
No shit!?

*Death*:  
Yes, certainly.

Although you flee from him,  
he often ponders your chestnut cheeks.

You shall know.

*Everyman*:  
God desires me?

---

<sup>2</sup> *Freaks and I'm No Angel*

*Death:*

Oh yes, no doubt.  
He wills a reckoning  
without delay.

*Everyman:*

I require notice!  
I am blind matter.  
I've misplaced my wit and cane,  
top hat and chloroform.  
Unrehearsed I am!

*Death:*

God prays for more juice.

Bring your journal on this journey  
so you may recount how you spent  
your time feeding wine to your lawn  
and your bad bad deeds.

*Everyman:*

Oh, *Death*.

I'll buy you a steak dinner if you  
defer this matter till another day.

*Death:*

My only pleasure is my job.  
Bribes are futile.

You loiter along the edges of my robe.

*Everyman:*

The acids boil in my cavities.

*Death:*

Hush little lamb.  
I wait for no man, woman or finch.  
The ocean waits for no fish, or wave, or surfer.  
All suffer for Adam's nakedness (and dry skin).

*Everyman:*

*Death*, if I take this pilgrimage,  
and my reckoning make,  
may I come again  
as a beast or a cricket?

*Death:*

I don't do the filing.

*Everyman:*

Shall I be alone in this last terse course?

*Death:*

Will your towers of dust-croppers not accompany you?

*Everyman:*

Yes, I shall take my goods!

*Death:*

*Perhaps you're interested in how a man undresses. You know, it's a funny thing about that. Quite a study in psychology. No two men do it alike. You know, I once knew a man who kept his hat on until he was completely undressed. Now he made a picture. Years later, his secret came out. He wore a toupee. Yeah. I have a method all my own. If you notice, the coat came first, then the tie, then the shirt. Now, uh, according to Hoyle, after that, the, uh, pants should be next. There's where I'm different. I go for the shoes next. First the right. Then the left. After that, it's, eh, every man for himself.<sup>3</sup>*

*Everyman:*

O wretched chicken-lover whither shall I flee,  
that I might frolic eternally corporeally?  
Now, sweet handsome non-violent *Death*,  
spare me till tomorrow,  
my dry cleaning needs to be picked up  
and I can't go looking this way.

*Death:*

Forsooth you are a long-toothed pansy.

*Everyman:*

Alas, I am neck deep in it,  
without a branch or box.  
Now I fear my pants are too tight to zip.

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<sup>3</sup> *It Happened One Night*

What, there trots *Fellowship*!  
 For in him reside all my insides.

I trust that he will bear me company,  
 after all he owes me a slice of flesh.

*Fellowship*:  
*Everyman*, good sorrow.  
 Sir, you look deflated.

*Everyman*:  
 You speak well and with care,  
 as if the vessels in your neck are wide  
 and willing to let the syrup flow free.

*Fellowship*:  
 Sir, how heavy is your heaviness?  
 Oh, your pithy distress, poor pantaloons!  
 If you have been soiled I shall avenge thee.

May my salted spores make you whole.  
 I would be ground into the earth, slain for thee.

*Everyman*:  
 If my heart should for you collapse,  
 you will flee from me,  
 and not cradle my limp neck.

*Fellowship*:  
 Do not despair, if you go to Hell,  
 I will not be far behind.

*Everyman*:  
 If Hell I deserve, and I may,  
 I shall be comforted by the crook of your arm.

*Fellowship*:  
 Show me the woe of your mind,  
 as I am your friend, in heart and casing.

*Everyman*:  
 I shall show you how it is;  
 I am to journey down a long path,

studded with trick switches and land mines,  
and before God recite passages from my diary.

*Fellowship:*

Such a voyage would deliver me to pain,  
and my bowels and bladder are small and weak.

Also, I so afeard, I've made a mess of things  
and my pantalets must I convert.

But let us take counsel as best we can,  
For if your words were nettles  
the thickest cortisone ointment would not do.

*Everyman:*

Bastard!

*Fellowship:*

Indeed and no.  
But I need a take-back, a hall pass,  
for I am like a snail trying to lift a lame dog.

Because *Death* is the messenger, no man will I go,  
not for the room my mother conceived and birthed me!

*Everyman:*

You are a giver of damp tissues!

*Fellowship:*

You twitch and hold moss to your ears.  
Farewell.

*Everyman:*

For help in this world whither shall I resort?

*Fellowship* plants merry herbs,  
and no little crow for me.

Now whither for succor shall I flee?

*Kindred:*

Over turned in our skin we are.

*Cousin:*

Everyman, you birthed your inner child too soon.

*Everyman:*

Now shall I show you the shortcut of grief:  
messenger, *Death*, God:  
pilgrimage of pain,  
diary divulged,  
never come again.

*Kindred:*

What is in said diary?

*Everyman:*

Deeds of this and that.  
How my organs function.

*Cousin:*

Have the carriages circle round again?  
No, by our green shade Lady; I have stubbed my toe,  
and have much to do, with washing and ironing,  
and jury tampering.

*Kindred:*

You shall have my maid with all my heart.

*Cousin:*

Farewell for now I must loiter on library steps.

*Everyman:*

Words have made me an old child  
resting upon broken knobbed radios.  
I time my lose teeth,  
but keep in mind my wondrous green enamel collections—  
All my loved stuff;  
how they keep me adrift in bliss and my heart case tight.

Where art thou, my *Sod* and riches?  
I need your tender touch!

*Sod:*

Who calls me? *Everyman*? How chaste is your chock!  
I lie, tethered to stakes in your chest.

*Everyman:*

My humors are diseased.  
I have boiling soiled clothes and strips of skin jerky.

I am sent to give a count.

*Sod:*

*Everyman*, I dance no man to such crossings.  
If I go, you will fare much worse.  
On me you have set all hope,  
and this hope is a growing fungus,  
rigid and covering your flushed cheeks.

I blot out chunks of memory.

Your passion for me,  
as vibrations through the body,  
will soften then diffuse your organs.

*Everyman:*

*Come, let us build us a tower whose top may reach unto the stars! And on top of the tower we will write the words: Great is the world and its Creator! And great is Man!*<sup>4</sup>

*Sod:*

You are better alone.  
I am brittle and my minerals already shift with every supple breeze.  
I would only constrict the music of your box.

*Everyman:*

Alas, I have loved you.

*Sod:*

Your ruin, over sprayed self-tanner,  
mingle with my love, pale veal meat.

I am merely a spell.

I am but a bandit.

*Everyman:*

O curse such false goods!

*Sod:*

You are a squid.  
Large eyed and slick,  
and lured by the faintest glow.

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<sup>4</sup> *Metropolis*

*Everyman:*

My knees are naked.

I will unearth my *Good-Deed* although  
she is weak—  
twitches imperceptibly,  
whispers only the air,  
like a mistaken coma of early colonialism.

*Good-Deeds:*

I lie in the ground,  
broad tree roots through my torso.

You buried me under all stratum of the earth,  
my only companions, night-crawlers.

Your book strapped to your feet  
pounding the soil dense around me.

*Everyman:*

*Good-Deeds*, help me,  
Or else I am damned: sock un-darned.

*Good-Deeds:*

Though I may not go,  
I have a lame sister for your pleasure,

*Knowledge:*

*Everyman*, I am a crutch.

*Knowledge:*

Now we go together, lovingly  
brushing sand from our pant legs,  
to *Confession*, that bloated abdomen,  
in the house of menthol:  
kneel down and ask mercy.

*Everyman:*

O glorious faucet  
that drains all the muck.

Now, I pray you, shrew, *Confession*,  
mother of all sea monkeys,

help me to de-prune,  
for I have over-mowed my turf.

*Confession:*

Scream uncle and you may be fed.

When the wire brush finally grazes your woolly shirt,  
then shall the lotion of absolution be spread.

*Everyman:*

Thanked be the stinging of a fulfilled belly-flop!

*Everyman:*

O how I heave from my bowels,  
the waves of ancient stele,  
dust clouds of loose shingles.

O ghastly conductor, receive my papers.

O *Mary*, mary quietly contriving,  
down with Alice, save me from the rabbit hole.

*Knowledge*, I give of my flesh,  
chunk by chunk I now begin.

*Knowledge:*

*Everyman*, God gave you a beeswax mold.

*Everyman:*

My body, blemished from over-radiated t.v. rooms:  
save me from God's waiting-room.

*Good-Deeds:*

*And just as I was commencing to get drowsy, I heard dogs howling. And when the dream came, it seemed the whole room was filled with mist. It was so thick, I could just see the lamp by the bed, a tiny spark in the fog. And then I saw two red eyes staring at me, and a white livid face came down out of the mist. It came closer and closer. I felt its breath on my face, and then its lips, ohhh,...and then in the morning, I felt so weak. It seemed as if all the life had been drained out of me.<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>5</sup> *Dracula*

*Everyman:*

My *Good-Deeds*, I hear your vibrations underfoot,  
I weep like a barefoot boy,  
the aftertaste of love.

*Knowledge:*

Put on the neon-stripped robe, little pollinator.

The garment of grief:  
it will make your pain perceptible,  
your robe will alert of your great sorrow

For you, regret is a spoon.

*Everyman:*

This robe I shall wear,  
from now on I am truly a machine.

*Good-Deeds:*

Lead three persons riddled with sight.  
*Secretion, Drought, and Bawd*  
will record your heels and wink in a round.

*Knowledge:*

Also, you should call upon your  
*Five-twits* as counselors.

*Wit has truth in it; wisecracking is simply calisthenics with words.*<sup>6</sup>

*Good-Deeds:*

Be wary my doltish friend,  
for *wit is educated insolence*<sup>7</sup>  
and may be the caviar garnish of a raccoon dinner.

*Knowledge:*

Call them through the stylized ritual  
of the ancient bow-legged storks.

*Everyman:*

I shall begin by flailing and proceed to cawing.

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<sup>6</sup> Dorothy Parker quote

<sup>7</sup> Aristotle quote

*Bawd:*

We have followed the sound of your flutter.

*Good-Deeds:*

Do you all agree to attend to him as a stick to a turtle?

*Secretion:*

We have come to wait on *Everyman*  
with a pocket full of posing good-deeds.

*Everyman:*

I desire my business to be as a coated capsule.

*Secretion:*

I, *Secretion*, will stand by you in emanation,  
though you would do battle in the backwash of the ocean.

*Bawd:*

No more will I undress death.

*Drought:*

*Everyman*, you are an opera of wishbones.  
We all give to you a forest.

*Everyman:*

I pray you are rewarded with gold spheres and fish banquets.

I give half my hands to you,  
and the remains support my groveling,  
beside the earth as a sad comet.

In quiet, the vacant arrive.

All this I do to spite the fiend,  
to drip like jam out of his pores.

*Knowledge:*

*Everyman*, be an ark,  
go to the woods and receive a cleansing:  
the bark rub, and sap lather.

*Five-twits:*

*Everyman*, a hole you are, and ready now.

There is no dictator, clerk or maid,  
that God has prized more  
as the loose-hipped jester.

You carry the keys and are weighed.

Here, in this transit train life,  
blessed sacraments of seven:  
swimming, cornification, fishing and boiling,  
mapping, the holy ventricles.

*Everyman:*

*I have no control over this. This evil thing inside me, the fire, the voices, the torment! It's there all the time -- driving me to wander the streets, following me silently, but I can feel it there -- it's me, pursuing myself -- I want to escape, to escape from myself but it's impossible... I can't escape, I have to obey it, I have to run endless streets -- I want to escape, to get away and I'm pursued by ghosts -- ghosts of mothers and of those children, they never leave me, they are there, always there, always, always except when I do it -- when I ... then I can't remember anything and afterwards I see those posters and read what I've done. Did I do that? But I can't remember anything about it, but who will believe me? Who knows what it's like to be me? How I'm forced to act -- how I must! -- must!-- don't want to -- but must -- and then a voice screams -- I can't bear to hear it -- I can't go on, I can't go on.<sup>8</sup>*

*Five-twits:*

You salivate for God's touch,  
precipitation exceeds all other trace.

You are converted into man from a stain.  
God has given you these original works of earth,  
as perishable as a paper angel.

With flint-marked words you construct  
a body, chest of mountains and river veins:  
you handle your maker between thin hands.

Only you can bind and unbind your bands,  
perform proper sacraments and feet kissing,  
you are the surgeon that cuts out the gift.

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<sup>8</sup> M

*Knowledge:*

Wicked priests give sinners challenge,  
 their children sit in other men's fires  
 and some haunt women's allies,  
 with unclean feet, and long lecherous fingers.

*Five-twits:*

The sheep and the shepherds have all been disband:  
 creatures of force remain.

*Everyman:*

I set each of you upon my wrists.

My clothes fold themselves, my limbs inside.

Into the dampest cave I must creep  
 and turn my blushed face to the earth and sleep.

*Bawd:*

What, to his grave? Alas!

*Everyman:*

There shall you consume me more and less.

*Bawd:*

Should I smother you and whither myself?

I cross myself out and sing adieu.  
 I take my hat in my lap and am gone.

Your chest is made of gold.

*Everyman:*

Bawd goes before I may catch her.  
 All promises like pencil lists.

*Secretion:*

*Everyman*, I am afraid that I will also forsake you.

By the bark of the burnt tree  
 I am done with all these hoops,  
 even though you weep till your heart is brass.

I regret ever showing my sad face.

*Everyman:*

I am to blame for these short lists.  
He that trusts in his *Secretions*  
will be deceived before the end.

*Drought:*

As for me, I shall leave you wanting.  
I must leave you for lusher scapes.

*Everyman:*

Yet, I pray thee, for the love of courtesy,  
Look in my grave, once, piteously.

*Everyman:*

O, all things fail, even from within.

*Five-twits:*

Finally, at the end, I shall take my leave.

*Good-Deeds:*

I shall remain, though I am slight.

*Everyman:*

My time is a stale raison.

*Good-Deeds:*

All things return to it:  
most mighty standing parents,  
most, dear.

Twist into a sprig of feathers, and I will speak for you.

*Everyman:*

Into your hairy belly, Lord.

I am a brocade,  
defend me from the damp,  
save me from the fiend's boast,  
that I may appear as a rod of coins.

*Knowledge:*

Here at your end, the sheep have fled my ears  
and I hear the singing of geese and glass lipped tumblers.

*Angel:*

I shall remove you from your body,  
like a thread caught in a fresh cut.

Your reckoning is a cotton marble.

**The Patch Through Hive** (Rewrite of *Dead Sea Scroll: The Book of Secrets*)

The speak-in is free.

Understand parables as crops,  
and those who would penetrate.

Those who hold fast-moving hermits,  
and those who walk over penny wells.

In every activity:  
stiff necks, hard palettes,  
and all the mass.

What good is the bridle,  
to those who search for the origins?  
Why is the root horned?  
Why is the joint steaming?

You protract with a whip,  
plan memory without angles  
like lions without prayers,  
so you might know the difference between secret and sin.

(but they did not know the secret of the way things are,  
nor did they understand the things of old,  
and they did not know what would come upon them,  
so they cannot rescue themselves  
without the secret of the way things are)

This shall be the sign.

When the source shuts up  
and wicker is banished  
as darkness in the presence of light,  
smoke may manifest the sun.

The world will be made firm  
with speckled darlings.

It is true that truth is utterances,  
tongues grasping for after dinner mints?

What should we call man?  
And the earth?  
Clipped below the bud.

Custard breast bones  
and the schemes of Belial  
shall have his name erased from the mouth.

Consider the soothsayers  
and say beetle.

Hear now what wisdom is:  
(tight)s  
(hidden)  
the heat with periods  
(the breaking)  
and the night (things).

He flosses your ears with children.  
He locks up behind the waters.

Splendid anger  
and terrible lined rulers.

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